



University of Colorado

Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

BOARD OF REGENTS

Published on *University of Colorado* (<http://www.cu.edu>)

[Home](#) > Appendix B: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Appendix B: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS ^[1]

Introduction

The following policies were recommended by the president's office following a study of department chairs conducted by University and campus faculty and administrators. They were approved by the Board of Regents on December 20, 1984, and apply to all department chairs in colleges and schools using the departmental structure.

A. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair

The Board of Regents and the administration endorse the following statement of roles and responsibilities of chairs developed by the Boulder Faculty Assembly and recommend its use by colleges, schools, and campuses, as appropriate and in conjunction with article 4, Laws of the Regents, 1990, as a vehicle for articulating the roles and responsibilities of the chair.

The Laws of the Regents delegate the development of the working structure of a department to that department in consultation with the appropriate dean. Many departmental administrative structures thus exist, with the chair playing differing roles in each. In some, the chair may have broad authority for independent action; in others, many functions are delegated (to differing extents) to standing or ad hoc committees, which may be appointed or elected. In the case where department rules delegate such responsibility to such committees, the chair has the ultimate responsibility of ensuring that the committees carry out their functions in an equitable, efficient, and timely manner. It is understood in what follows that the duties and responsibilities described are thus to be interpreted in terms of the working rules of the individual departments.

1. Leader of the Department

a. The chair has the responsibility for providing leadership toward the achievement of the highest possible level of excellence in the teaching, research, and service activities of the department. The chair is expected to articulate the goals of the department, both within and without the department, to articulate the department's actions or requests in pursuit of these aims, and to maintain a climate that is hospitable to creativity and innovation. The chair has the responsibility to inform the department of the stances and actions of the dean and other administrators that might affect the department.

b. In the larger framework of the college, the chair, as a faculty member, has a special responsibility in representing the department in areas of formulation of educational policy and academic ethics, as provided in article 4, Laws of the Regents, 1990.

c. The chair is ultimately responsible for the recruitment, selection, and evaluation of both the academic and the staff personnel of the department. In consultation with colleagues, and in consonance with the appropriate departmental procedures, the chair recommends appointments, promotion, merit increases, and terminations. The chair has the explicit responsibility to ensure that faculty members are aware of the departmental, college, and campus criteria prescribed for appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure, and to make appraisals and recommendations in accordance with the procedures and principles stated in the Laws of the Regents. In the course of recruitment of new appointees or in relation to salary increases or advancement of incumbents, the department chair shall make no formal commitment as to rank and salary until such action has received final approval of the appropriate administrative office. The chair has the responsibility to be familiar with the state personnel system, and to ensure that staff are aware of departmental expectations and of state personnel system criteria for appointment, reappointment, job classification, and promotion.

d. The chair should be receptive to questions, complaints, grievances, and suggestions from members of the department, both academic and staff personnel, and from students. The chair has the responsibility to take appropriate action as required.

2. Administrator of the Department

As administrator of the department, the chair has duties which include the following, although special assignments may be added from time to time, and the dean or chancellor may specify additional duties. The chair is responsible for:

a. Assignment of teaching and other duties within the department consistent with appropriate FTE levels, and consistent with the concept that the appropriate mix of teaching, research or creative work, scholarship, and service may differ from person to person, and from time to time in the career of an individual.

b. Preparation of the schedule of courses and of times and places for class meetings.

c. Arrangement and assignment of duty for counseling of students, and for training and supervision of teaching assistants and other student teachers and teacher aides.

d. Preparation of the budget and administration of the financial affairs of the department, in strict accordance with dollar and FTE allocations and in accord with University rules and procedures.

e. Recommendation of sabbatical leaves and other leaves of absence to the dean, and for ensuring that their scheduling is consistent with departmental needs.

f. Promptly reporting the resignation or death of any member of the department.

g. Custody and authorized use of University property charged to the department, and assignment of departmental space and facilities to authorized activities in accordance with University policy and campus rules and regulations.

- h. Departmental observance of proper health and safety regulations, in coordination with the campus environmental health and safety officer.
- i. Maintenance of records and of faculty and staff personnel files, and preparation of reports in accordance with the University and college procedures.
- j. Enforcement of the "one-sixth" rule regarding outside compensation for consulting in accordance with regent and campus regulations.
- k. Reporting to the dean, or appropriate administrators - whenever the problem cannot be expeditiously resolved at the departmental level - any failure of an academic or staff member of the department to carry out responsibilities, and recommendation of appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action.

In the performance of the duties listed above, the chair is expected to seek the advice of departmental faculty colleagues in a systematic way, to provide for the conduct of department affairs in an orderly manner through department meetings and the appointment of appropriate committees, and to keep department members informed of his or her actions in a timely manner. The chair is also expected to seek student advice on matters of concern to students enrolled in the department's programs. In large departments, the chair may be assisted by a vice chair or other colleagues in the tasks involved in carrying out his or her responsibilities and, when desired, by an executive committee chosen in an appropriate manner.

B. Appointment

1. Criteria

The appointment of department chairs should be based on the following criteria:

- a. Ability to provide intellectual leadership in the development of departmental faculty and programs;
- b. Ability to provide administrative leadership in the effective functioning of the department; and
- c. Personal skills to deal effectively with faculty, administrators, and support staff within the college and campus structure.

2. Procedures: Boulder, Denver, and Colorado Springs Campuses and School of Nursing

- a. Prior to initiating search and nomination procedures for a department chair, the faculty of the department should meet with the dean of the school or college to discuss the needs and expectations of the department as they relate to the appointment of a new chair, the role of the chair, and the type of search (i.e., internal or external) that will most likely assure that an appropriate candidate is recommended, and to discuss any budgetary considerations related to the search and appointment of a new chair.
- b. A search and nominating process will be carried out by the faculty of the department in accordance with department procedures. The faculty will subsequently submit its recommendation to the dean.
- c. If the dean does not concur with the department faculty's recommendation, the dean will

meet with the department faculty to discuss his/her reasons for disagreement.

d. 2 The campus chancellor will approve appointments of department chairs.

e. It will be the responsibility of the deans and the chancellors to assure that recruitment and appointment procedures for department chairs reflect the University's commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action. In order to achieve this objective, efforts should be made to provide experience for females and minorities that will prepare them for these positions.

3.1 Procedures: School of Medicine, School of Dentistry, and School of Pharmacy

a. Prior to establishing a search committee for a department chair, the dean will meet with the faculty of the concerned department to discuss the needs and expectations of the department as they relate to the appointment of a new chair, the role of the chair, and the type of search (i.e., internal or external) that will most likely assure that an appropriate candidate is recommended, and to discuss any budgetary considerations related to the search and appointment of a new chair.

b. A search committee will be appointed by the dean. The search committee will include departmental representation.

c. The search committee will recommend a candidate for the chair to the dean in accordance with school procedures. The dean will discuss the candidate with the faculty in the department concerned.

d. The campus chancellor will approve appointments of department chairs.

e. It will be the responsibility of the deans and the chancellors to assure that recruitment and appointment procedures for department chairs reflect the University's commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action. In order to achieve this objective, efforts should be made to provide experience for females and minorities that will prepare them for these positions.

4. Term of Appointment

a.1 Consistent with article 4, Laws of the Regents, 1990, department chairs will normally serve for four year terms. Appointments may be made occasionally for shorter periods for specific reasons, and certain appointments in the schools of medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy may be indeterminate in length.

b. Reappointment of a department chair to an additional term will be dependent on the outcome of a performance evaluation and the positive recommendation of the department and dean.

c. Department chairs may be appointed on the basis of either academic year (9-month) or fiscal year (12-month) appointments as appropriate, depending on the needs of the department.

5. Termination for Cause

Termination for just cause of an appointment of a department chair prior to the expiration of a term of appointment may be recommended by either the department faculty or the dean. Reasons for termination for cause will be the same as those specified for faculty in section

5.C.1, Laws of the Regents, 1990. Department recommendations for termination must comply with written procedures developed by the department. Prior to making such a recommendation, the dean will consult with the department faculty and the chancellor. In case of disagreement between the faculty members in the department and the dean, there will be an administrative hearing conducted by the chancellor's office, which will include adequate faculty representation. All such terminations are subject to approval by the chancellor, the president, and the Board of Regents.

C. Evaluation

1. All department chairs will be subject to a comprehensive performance evaluation at least once every four years. The evaluation will be conducted by the dean of the college/school and the department faculty in accordance with procedures developed by the department in consultation with the dean.
2. Formal input from other department constituencies (i.e., staff and students and other departments) will be obtained as part of the evaluation process.
3. Prior to recommending the reappointment of a department chair to another term, a comprehensive performance evaluation will be conducted.

D. Orientation

1. Each dean will develop an orientation program for all new department chairs within his/her unit. The orientation program should provide information that will enable the department chair to function more effectively and efficiently. Areas which should be addressed in the orientation program include University personnel procedures for faculty and classified staff, the budget and planning processes, development of new degree programs, faculty governance relationships, relationships with other offices such as contracts and grants and with the administrative hierarchy, and other areas that are relevant to the department. In consultation with the departments and the vice chancellor for academic affairs, each dean may consider developing other types of programs and vehicles that will enhance the ability of the department chair to provide strong leadership.
2. Each campus chancellor, with the support and participation of the president's office, will be responsible for assuring that appropriate orientation programs are developed on the campus. The orientation programs may be presented on a campuswide basis or by college or school. Each campus chancellor also will be responsible for developing formal mechanisms on the campus to assure that the program and management information necessary for the department chair to function effectively is provided to the department chair in a timely manner.

E. Compensation

1. Within budget limitations, the administration will make a commitment to provide a level of support to department chairs (including compensation and other forms of support) which makes the job of department chair more attractive and recognizes the value of strong leadership.
2. A special stipend or other form of compensation will be provided to department chairs to recognize the important leadership role they play. The size of the stipend should be determined in the context of the size of the department, the functions of the chair, and other types of support which will be provided to the chair.

1 B.3. and B.4.a. amended 10/20/94 (added School of Pharmacy to reflect change from divisions to departments approved 12/16/93).

2 B.2.d and B.3.d. amended 08/03/00

Source URL: <http://www.cu.edu/regents/appendix-b-roles-and-responsibilities-department-chairs>

Links:

[1] <http://www.cu.edu/regents/appendix-b-roles-and-responsibilities-department-chairs>